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DONIZETTI'S HAUNTING

Lucia di Lammermoor

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is driven to
madness and
murder by her
evil brother...*

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∞ ABOUT THE COMPANY ∞

BALTIMORE OPERA THEATRE, now in its second season, is a new opera company in Baltimore created by native Baltimorean, Jenny Kelly, a former opera singer, and Bulgarian opera impresario Giorgio Lalov who have donated their time and talents salary free to make these performances a reality for the artists and the public. To date, the company has presented three performances of full-scale opera at the Hippodrome Theatre. This evening the company brings full-scale opera back to the Gordon Center for Performing Arts. Baltimore Opera Theatre holds an aesthetic view of the arts that is mindful of current economic challenges and grounded in the philosophy that connecting with an audience is not based on frivolous budgets and grandiosity, but on artists and audience having a meaningful exchange that enriches their lives. The company has kept ticket prices as low as possible and begins the performances at 7PM so families and the elderly can get back home at a reasonable hour. BALTIMORE OPERA THEATRE plans to present annual full-scale opera productions at selected Baltimore area venues featuring both European and American soloists, musicians and conductors. The popular non profit European opera touring company; Teatro Lirico D'Europa, that has completed over 4000 performances worldwide, has donated sets and costumes for the performances. Baltimore Opera Theatre engages local singers in certain comprimario roles when possible and local performing arts school participate as extras. This unique combination of international artists coming together has proven to be a wonderful opportunity for cultural exchange and education for everyone involved in the process. If you would like to be included in our direct mail and e-mail list, please send an e-mail with your information to jkelly@baltimoreoperatheatre.net. The web site of Baltimore Opera Theatre is www.baltimoreoperatheatre.net

∞ GIVE TO BALTIMORE OPERA THEATRE ∞

BALTIMORE OPERA THEATRE, INC. received its official NON PROFIT status from the IRS on June 17, 2010 under section 501 (c) (3). Our EIN is 26-4684179. All contributions are deductible under section 790 of the code. We are entitled to receive tax-deductible bequests, devises, transfers and gifts under section 2055, 2106 and 2522 of the code. Baltimore Opera Theater, Inc. needs help from our community's philanthropic leaders. We would greatly appreciate your help. The company needs donations to aide with all of the many costs that go into producing a full-scale opera. Jenny Kelly, Founder and President and Giorgio Lalov, Artistic Director and Stage Director are dedicating their time and energies salary free to develop this young company. Please send contributions to BALTIMORE OPERA THEATRE, INC., PO Box 1452 Cockeysville, MD 21030

Baltimore Opera Theatre
Lucia di Lammermoor

By Gaetano Donizetti

Libretto by Salvatore Commarano

based on Sir Walter Scott's novel *The Bride of Lammermoor*

first produced in Naples, Italy in 1835

Artistic Director/Stage DirectorGiorgio Lalov
ConductorKrassimir Topolov
Sets and CostumesGiorgio Lalov
Lights.....Giorgio Bajukliev
Super TitlesMaestro Internationale

∞ DISTRIBUTION ∞

NORMANNOYuri Nikolov
Captain of the Ravenswood guard

LORD ENRICO ASHTON.....Plamen Dimitrov
Brother of Lucia

RAIMONDO BIDEBENTWilliam Powers
Priest and tutor to Lucia

LUCIA.....Olga Orlovskaya
Sister of Lord Ashton

ALISAViara Zhelezova
Companion to Lucia

SIR EDGARDO OF RAVENSWOODIgor Borko

LORD ARTURO BUCKLAWGueorgui Dinev

Chorus of ladies and gentleman attached to the house of Ashton,
inhabitants of Lammermoor, pages, servants at Ashton

Setting: Scotland in the late 17th Century

MEET THE ARTISTS

YURI NIKOLOV (Normanno)

The Bulgarian tenor is a graduate of the Sofia Conservatory of Music. Mr. Arsov has performed with opera companies in Bulgaria and Eastern Europe for over 20 years and has been a guest artist with Teatro Lirico D'Europa on tour worldwide since 1990.

PLAMEN DIMITROV (Enrico)

Bulgarian baritone, Plamen Dimitrov, has performed various roles with Teatro Lirico on tour in the United States during the last five seasons, including Schaunard in *LA BOHÈME*, Morales in *CARMEN* and Ping in *TURANDOT*, Sharpless in *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*, Giorgio Germont in *LA TRAVIATA*, the title role in *RIGOLETTO* and Escamillo in *CARMEN*. He also performs as a principal soloist in Bulgaria with Sofia National Opera and Opera Varna and has been a guest artist in other Eastern and Western European opera companies. Mr. Dimitrov studied at the National Academy of Music in Sofia, Bulgaria and is a laureate of several academic competitions. For five years, he worked in the Musical Theater-Sofia in the part of Charlie in *CHARLIE'S AUNT* and Cascada in *DIE LUSTIGE WITWE*.

WILLIAM POWERS (Raimondo)

Since making his New York City Opera debut in 1972, Chicagoan William Powers has performed over 100 operatic roles with the major opera companies in the United States, Europe, and South America. While the stylistic range of his portrayals spans the gamut from Renaissance (Monteverdi's *ORFEO* for San Francisco) to Contemporary (Pasatieri's *SEAGULL* for Washington, D.C.), Mr. Powers has earned an enviable reputation as a "heavy," due in large part to the dark, penetrating color of his voice; thus, the portrayal of rogues and villains has dominated his career. His teachers and mentors, George London and Norman Treigle, have also contributed to the dramatic intensity of his delivery, for which Mr. Powers has become well known.

Mr. Powers created many new roles through world premiers or important revivals, most recently singing the villain Meyer Wolfsheim for the premier of Harbison's *THE GREAT GATSBY* at the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Other new creations have included Penderecki's *PARADISE LOST* for Chicago's Lyric Opera, Herrmann's *WUTHERING HEIGHTS* for Portland, Copeland's *HOLY BLOOD AND CRESCENT MOON* for Cleveland and Petrassi's *SESTINA D'AUTUNNO* for Italy's Spoleto Festival. Of re-creations, Mr. Powers offered the role of Celio for the 50th anniversary production of Prokofiev's *THE LOVE OF THREE ORANGES* for Chicago, Donizetti's rarely heard *BETLY* for Strasbourg and the French version of Donizetti's *LA FAVORITE* for the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and the Opéra Comique in Paris. His creations also include the Italian version of *THE LADY MACBETH OF THE MTZENSK DISTRICT* for Spoleto and the American premiere of Handel's *PORO, RE DI INDIE* for The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Handel Festival.

Mr. Powers' voice has been widely recorded and heard in hundreds of broadcasts. In 2000, he released a solo CD on the Centaur label, entitled *Rogues and Villains*. In 2009, he followed with yet another collection of wicked evildoers and miscreants, called *The Worst of William Powers*, containing dozens of arias from many under-handed

characters, including Rossini's Babilio, Dr. Bartolo, Mustafa and Don Magnifico, Verdi's Iago from *OTELLO*, Beethoven's Pizzaro, Ponchielli's Alvisè and Mussorgsky's Boris Godunov. The various devils Mr. Powers has reincarnated include Gounod's Mephistopheles, Meyerbeer's Bertram and Boito's Mefisto. Villains the celebrated bass has portrayed include Four Villains of Offenbach's *LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN*, Reverend Blitch of Floyd's *SUSANNAH*, Wagner's Alberich, Mozart's Leporello, Puccini's Gianni Schicchi, Gruenberg's Jones, and the ultimate rascal of them all, Verdi's Falstaff.

Recent performances have included the Chicago premiere of *DER KAISER VON ATLANTIS*, and *THE TALES OF HOFFMANN* (in the controversial Ratner version) for the Chicago Opera Theater. Mr. Powers performed *WERTHER* of Massenet for the Klangbogen Festival of Vienna, as well as the Basque National Opera of Bilbao, *DEAD MAN WALKING* for Cincinnati, *THE DAMNATION OF FAUST* for Chicago's Grant Park Festival and the Pablo Casal's Festival of San Juan. He sang in the Opera Gala for the Festival of the Aegean in Athens and Styros, *FAUST* for Trieste, *THE BARBER OF SEVILLE* for Charlotte and Buenos Aires, *THE MAGIC FLUTE* for Bozeman, Maryland, *FIDELIO* for Cedar Rapids and the national tour of Teatro Lirico d'Europa's production of Puccini's *TOSCA*, *LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR* and *TURANDOT* and *RIGOLETTO* for Baltimore Opera Theatre.

OLGA ORLOVSKAYA (Lucia)

The young Russian dramatic coloratura soprano graduated with honors from the Russian Academy of Music. She was a special prizewinner of the international competition Operetta Land for best performance in 2008 in Moscow. Her career highlights have included singing the role of Katerina in *LADY MACBETH OF THE MTSENSK* by Shostakovich with Novosibirsk State Opera Theater, for which she won a Golden Mask nomination as well as Violetta in *LA TRAVIATA*, Rusalka in *RUSALKA* by Dvorak, Queen of the Night in Mozart's *DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE*, and solo concerts in Paris, Dresden, Brussels, Luxemburg and Geneva. Ms. Orlovskaya made her debut in the United States in winter 2006 with *THE STANISLAVSKY OPERA* (of Moscow) American tour of Columbia Artists Mgmt. in the role of Adele in Johann Strauss's *DIE FLIEDERMAUS*. Ms. Orlovskaya is the founder and artistic director of the quartet *The Russian Sopranos*, resides in Maryland and is a U.S. citizen. She is making her debut with *BALTIMORE OPERA THEATRE* this season as Lucia.

VIARA ZHELEZOVA (Alisa)

The Bulgarian mezzo-soprano graduated from the National Conservatory of Music in 1985 and joined the roster of the Bulgarian National Opera, where she has performed leading mezzo-soprano roles alongside such singers as Ghena Dimitrova, Nicolai Giuselev, Anna Tomova Sintova and others. She has appeared as a guest artist with opera companies throughout Eastern Europe and has been a principal soloist with Teatro Lirico D'Europa since 1992. She has enjoyed a huge success in the United States as Rosina in *IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA*, the title role in Bizet's *CARMEN*, Suzuki in *MADAMA BUTTERFLY*, Zerlina and Donna Elvira in *DON GIOVANNI*, and as Prince Orlofsky with Czech Opera Prague in its lavish production of *DIE FLEDERMAUS*.

IGOR BORKO (Edgardo)

Ukrainian tenor Igor Borko made his U.S. debut in 2006 with Teatro Lirico D'Europa as Alfredo in LA TRAVIATA and Rodolfo in LA BOHÈME. He enjoyed a huge success with Baltimore Opera Theatre in March 2009 as the Duke in Verdi's RIGOLETTO. Soloist of the National State Opera in Kiev, Mr. Borko is a laureate of a number of international competitions, including, among others, the Vincenzo Bellini Competition at Ragusa, Italy, and the Francisco Vinas Competition in Barcelona, Spain. He studied at the Tchaikovsky National Academy of Music and attended master classes with Renate Faltn in Germany and Furelli Carmen-Forti at Milan's La Scala.

Mr. Borko has made guest appearances in the United States, China, France, Japan, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Romania, Hungary and Russia. His repertoire encompasses principal parts in Donizetti's LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR, Bizet's LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES, Puccini's LA BOHÈME, Verdi's RIGOLETTO and LA TRAVIATA, Richard Strauss's DER ROSENKAVALIER, Tchaikovsky's EUGENE ONEGIN, Gounod's FAUST, Rimsky-Korsakov's ALEKO, SNEGUROCHKA and THE TSAR'S BRIDE. Mr. Bork made his debut appearance at the Prague State Opera in 2008, as Edgardo in LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR, reprising the role twice that spring. That summer the tenor performed in the 16th Festival of Italian Operas. Recent engagements include the role of the Duke of Mantua in RIGOLETTO at the Prague State Opera in fall 2010 as well as performances with Ukrainian National Opera.

GUEORGUI DINEV (Lord Arturo Bucklaw)

The Bulgarian actor has worked professionally in his native country for more than 20 years, onstage as an actor, in film, and as a soloist in opera and operetta performances. He has performed secondary roles with Teatro Lirico D'Europa on tour in the United States since the winter 2000 in almost every single production.

KRASSIMIR TOPOLOV (Conductor)

The Bulgarian maestro who was educated in Vienna has been the principal conductor for Teatro Lirico D'Europa since 1995. In addition to conducting hundreds of performances for the company on tour in central Europe, he has conducted all 10 American tours for the company. Maestro Topolov is also a frequent guest conductor with opera companies in Bulgaria and several Eastern European cities.

GIORGIO LALOV (Artistic Director/Stage Director/Set, Costumes)

Gueorgui (Giorgio) Lalov was born in Telesh, Bulgaria in June 1958. His father, "Lalo," a doctor, and his mother, Stoiyanka, an elementary school teacher and Bulgarian folk singer, were educated patrons of the arts. When Lalo Lalov died, Giorgio was only nine years old, but because he was an excellent student, he entered an elite boarding school in the capital city of Bulgaria that taught all lessons in French. When he graduated from high school in 1976, he was fluent in French and English. That fall he entered the Bulgarian National Academy of Music and went on tour throughout Italy with a choir from the university. While in Milan, he auditioned for the famous International School for Young Opera Singers at La Scala, was accepted and went on to make his operatic debut at La Scala at the age of 25.

After living in Italy for a short time, Mr. Lalov became fluent in Italian. In 1986, while on tour with an opera company in France, he met Yves Josse, a former ballet dancer who was booking opera and ballet tours. They became business partners. Mr. Lalov had many resources: He spoke several languages, was able to organize the creation of sets and costumes in Bulgaria and put together an excellent orchestra and chorus. He also knew many fine opera singers in Bulgaria, central Europe and the United States.

By 1988, Messrs. Josse and Lalov were collaborating on what was to become the most successful opera touring company in Europe. At the time of Mr. Josse's death in 1995, Teatro Lirico presented over 250 performances a season throughout Europe at 180 different venues. These included performances for Opera Dijon and at other major European theatres, such as Palais des Festivals (Biarritz), Théâtre Alexandre Dumas and Pavillon Baltard, (Region Paris), Théâtre de Grenoble, Théâtre Molière, (Sete), Théâtre Municipal, (St. Maur des Fosses), Théâtre de Cognac, Théâtre Municipal Armand, (Salon de Provence), Salle Pleyel, (Paris), Scene Nationale, (Cherbourg), Odysseus, (Blagnac), La Scene Municipale (Lyon) and Quartz, (Brest) in France.

Teatro Lirico performance also include those presented at l'Atrium Theatre in Martinique, Théâtre du Grand Casino (Geneve), Congresshaus, (Zurich) and Théâtre de BeauLiève (Lausanne) in Switzerland, Théâtre Municipal (Hasselt) and Le Cirque Royale (Brussels) in Belgium. City Hall (Gotingen) and Théâtre Carre (Amsterdam) in Holland hosted other performances. Teatro also performed at Theatre Margharita, (Trapani) in Sicily, at Italian Summer Festivals such as Festival Busetto, Festival San Giovanna Valdarn, and open-air festival in such cities in Italy as Spello, Montecatini Terme, Siena., Chianciano Terme, Cortona, Aenzzo, Padova and Aimini.

Shows were also presented for Okinawa Performing Arts Center in Japan, Tivoli Gardens (Copenhagen), in Denmark, Forum Cultural Do Seixal, (Lisboa) Academia Almadense, (Lisboa), and Theatre Trinidad, (Lisboa) in Portugal, Kuppelsaal, (Hanover), Gurzenith, (Koln), CCH-I, (Hamburg.), MUK, (Lubeck), Liederhalle, (Stuttgart), Schwarzwaldhalle (Karlsruhe) and Rosengarten, (Mannheim) in Germany.

In Spain, the venerable opera company also performed at Teatro Principal, (Alicante) Teatro Municipal Cervantes (Alicante), Teatro Del Carmen, (Malaga) Palacio de Congresos. (Granada), Teatro Municipal Enrique de la Cueva, (Seville), Teatro Atlantida VIC, (Barcelona) Salida de La Compania, (Madrid) Auditorio Ferai de Muestras (Valladolid), Gran Teatro de Burgos, Teatro Juan Bravo (Segovia), Auditorio Municipal Maestro Padillain (Almeria) Gran Teatro Galla (Cadiz), Teatro Monumental (Barcelona) Teatro Principal (Zaragoza) Teatro Cervantes, (Madrid), Teatro Victoria Eugeniain, (San Sebastian), Teatro Vicente Espinel, (Malaga), Teatro Bueno Vallejo (Madrid) Teatro Cervantes (Malaga) and Teatro "Lope de Vega" (Sevilla).

Winter 2000 marked Teatro Lirico's first major American tour. The reviews from the 12 consecutive tours (2000-2009) Teatro Lirico D'Europa has completed in the United States speak for the high quality and consistency of the company.

"I'm not alone in hoping that Giorgio Lalov, the talented opera singer turned creator of Teatro Lirico D'Europa stays happy and healthy and continues to bring us such magnificent productions. We can only hope to see more from this company in years to come."

SYNOPSIS OF THE OPERA

In a feud between the Scottish families of Ravenswood and Lammermoor, Enrico (Lord Henry Ashton of Lammermoor) has gained the upper hand over Edgardo (Edgar of Ravenswood), killing his kinsmen and taking over his estates. By the time of the opera's action, however, Enrico's fortunes have begun to wane. In political disfavor, he stakes all on uniting his family with that of Arturo (Lord Arthur Bucklaw), whom he means to force his sister, Lucia (Lucy Ashton), to marry.

ACT I. In a ruined park near Lammermoor Castle, Enrico's retainers prepare to search for a mysterious trespasser. Normanno, captain of the guard, remains behind to greet Enrico, who decries Lucia's refusal to marry Arturo. When the girl's elderly tutor, Raimondo, suggests that grief over her mother's death keeps her from thoughts of love, Normanno reveals that Lucia has been discovered keeping trysts with a hunter who saved her from a raging bull. He suspects the stranger is none other than Edgardo. Enrico rages, and as retainers confirm Normanno's suspicions, he swears vengeance.

At a fountain near her mother's tomb, Lucia, fearful of her brother, awaits a rendezvous with Edgardo. She tells her confidante, Alisa, the tale of a maiden's ghost that haunts the fountain and has warned her of a tragic end to her love for Edgardo. Though Alisa implores her to take care, Lucia cannot restrain her love. On arrival, Edgardo explains he must go to France on a political mission but wishes to reconcile himself with Enrico so he and Lucia may marry. Lucia, knowing her brother will not relent, begs Edgardo to keep their love a secret. Though infuriated at Enrico's persecution, he agrees. The lovers seal their vows by exchanging rings, then bid each other farewell.

ACT II. In an anteroom of Lammermoor Castle, Enrico plots with Normanno to force Lucia to marry Arturo. As the captain goes off to greet the bridegroom, Lucia enters, distraught but defiant, only to be shown a forged letter, supposedly from Edgardo, proving him pledged to another. Crushed, she longs for death, but Enrico insists on her marrying at once to save the family fortunes. Now Raimondo urges her to consent to the wedding, invoking the memory of her mother and asking her to respect the family's desperate situation. When she yields, he reminds her there are heavenly rewards for earthly sacrifices.

In the great hall of Lammermoor, as guests hail the union of two important families, Arturo pledges to restore the Ashtons' prestige. Enrico prepares him for Lucia's melancholy by pleading her grief over her mother's death. No sooner has the girl entered and been forced to sign the marriage contract than Edgardo bursts in. Returning earlier than expected, he has learned of the wedding and come to claim his bride. Bloodshed is averted only when Raimondo commands the rivals to put up their swords. Seeing Lucia's signature on the contract, Edgardo tears his ring from her finger, curses her and rushes from the hall. Hardly comprehending his words, Lucia collapses.



Soprano, OLGA ORLOVSKAYA

ACT III. Edgardo sits in a chamber at the foot of Wolf's Crag tower, deep in thought, as a storm rages. Enrico rides there to confront him, and the flames of their enmity flare. They agree to meet at dawn among the tombs of the Ravenswoods to fight a duel.

The continuing wedding festivities are halted when Raimondo enters to announce that Lucia, gone mad, has stabbed and killed Arturo in the bridal chamber. Disheveled, unaware of what she has done, she wanders in, recalling her meetings with Edgardo and imagining herself married to him. When the angry Enrico rushes in, he is silenced by the sight of her pitiful condition. Believing herself in heaven, Lucia falls dying.

Among the tombs of his ancestors, Edgardo, last of the Ravenswoods, laments Lucia's supposed betrayal and awaits his duel with Enrico, which he hopes will end his own life. Guests leaving Lammermoor Castle tell Edgardo the dying Lucia has called his name. As he is about to rush to her side, Raimondo arrives to tell of her death, and her bier is carried by. Resolving to join Lucia in heaven, Edgardo stabs himself and dies.

DRIVING WOMEN MAD

By Mary Jane Phillips-Matz

One of the most versatile and popular opera composers of all time, Gaetano Donizetti dominated his field for many years, but his success did not come easily. Born in 1797 into a desperately poor family in the northern Italian city of Bergamo, he was sent to charity schools, where he was quickly identified as promising music student. As a youth, however, he had to defy his parents, who did not want him in the theatre.

Three student operas were written before he turned professional; and when he was twenty one, his first full-scale stage work was produced in Venice, launching a career that lasted nearly thirty years. Later commissions from impresarios and opera houses took him to Naples, Milan, Florence, Paris, and Vienna, among many other cities. In Vienna in 1843, he achieved the highest honor imaginable when the emperor named him the official Court Composer and Master of the Imperial Chapel, a post Mozart had once held. Over the course of his career, Donizetti wrote more than 75 operas and scores of other works: songs for the solo voice and difficult pieces for two or three voices or piano; chamber music, cantatas, hymns, and religious and orchestral works. Donizetti died in 1848.

The Background of Lucia di Lammermoor

The most popular of all Donizetti's operas has always been Lucia di Lammermoor, which he wrote under a commission from a major theatre, the San Carlo Opera in Naples. This opera is based on *The Bride of Lammermoor*, Sir Walter Scott's great Romantic novel, the plot of which Scott may have taken from an actual murder case when a bride killed her groom on their wedding night.

The librettist of Lucia was Salvatore Cammarano, a polished Neapolitan poet and playwright who wrote several librettos for Donizetti. Coming from a large clan of theatrical professionals: actors, comedians, writers, and stage managers, Cammarano also wrote texts for Giuseppe Verdi and other composers.

The Opera's World Premiere and Subsequent Popularity

After the premiere of Lucia in 1835, the opera became so wildly successful that the world's "celebrity" singers wanted to appear in it, and it almost immediately became a showpiece for coloratura sopranos. The busiest theatres scheduled performances of it by the hundreds, and soon Lucia was being produced all over Europe and even in South America and the Caribbean. Having reached London in 1838 and the United States in 1841, it has remained in the world's repertory for more than 170 years. Its success is certainly owed to Donizetti's genius at bringing characters to vivid life while achieving a perfect balance between voices and orchestra. In a word, Lucia is a seamless, poetic, heartrending Romantic work.

The Hapless Bride and Her Fate

When Donizetti was looking for a source to use for his new opera, he said he wanted to write about "love, violent love, without which operas are cold." That is what he did in Lucia, which is set in the Lammermoor Hills of Scotland. The action takes place in the turbulent 1680s and 1690s, when several European countries were at war and many Scottish families were torn apart by clan wars. The hero and heroine of the opera are Edgardo of Ravenswood and Lucia Ashton, whose families are mortal enemies. Because Lucia and Edgardo have secretly exchanged rings with each other and taken private vows, they consider themselves husband and wife. Their happiness, however, is destroyed when Lucia's villainous brother, Enrico Ashton, forces her into an arranged marriage to save their family's fortunes.

The opera conveys a weighty moral message by showing how brutally Lucia is treated by her brother. At the same time it lays bare the wretched status of women, whose oppression was then fully sanctioned by law. To protect her virginity, a girl or woman could be locked up at home for years, a prisoner of her family's need to make a "respectable" marriage for her. The moment she married, her condition worsened, for her all her money, her property, and even her children became her husband's under law, and he could beat her or rape her at will. Divorce was almost impossible, and if she left her husband, she was forced to leave her children with him. It is certainly no exaggeration to say that women and children were no more than mere property for men to dispose of however they wished. In practice, this meant that from childhood on, millions of girls were forced to show respect and abject humility to all adults, speak with low voices, and be "as meek as lambs." From birth to death, they lived without ever taking a single breath of freedom.

Quite naturally, this repression of every emotion, every hope, and every desire was required for women to live "normally." Lucia is the absolute personification of the horrors such total repression would cause. Enrico, Lucia's brother, is desperate to see her married to Lord Bucklaw, and when she resists, he lies to her and shows her forged letters proving that Edgardo is in love with someone else. Close to a total breakdown, she feels chills and fever and is close to fainting, but she bows to Enrico's relentless pressure and signs the marriage contract with Lord Bucklaw. At that moment, in one of opera's most electrifying scenes, Edgardo bursts in upon the celebration and curses Lucia for betraying their love. After he is driven out, the formal rites go forward, and Lucia is led to her marriage bed. There, driven to madness, she kills her groom and emerges from the bridal chamber drenched in blood. Edgardo takes refuge in the cemetery where his ancestors lie, but people from Ashton's castle tell him she is dying. Hearing the tolling of the bell for the dead, Edgardo kills himself.

It is surely no accident that Lucia di Lammermoor remains Donizetti's most popular opera, for it so much more than a Romantic tale with a touch of Gothic horror. Instead it is an intimate portrait of a woman driven mad by the repression of her very self.



baltimore opera theatre

Giorgio Lalov, Artistic Director

Presents Giuseppe Verdi's

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